

Introduction

This *Cooperative Management Plan/Environmental Assessment* is being prepared in accordance with the guidelines for a special resource study. It is being called a cooperative management plan to emphasize the close working relationships that have been developed among local, regional, state, federal, and tribal governments as well as the public participation involved in this planning effort. Two management alternatives are presented in this plan for the protection and preservation of resources and for the provision of appropriate public use at Moccasin Bend.

BACKGROUND

In 1950, Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman reported to the chairman of the House Committee on Public Lands that "The Moccasin Bend lands, which are now chiefly used for agricultural purposes, should be added to the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park for administration and protection in keeping with general objectives of national park administration. . . . The Federal expense in administering this additional area probably will be nominal." Support by Secretary Chapman was predicated on the fact that Moccasin Bend was essentially devoid of incompatible development and would have minimal impact on the NPS budget. That same year Congress enacted legislation that authorized the addition of not-to-exceed 1,400 acres of Moccasin Bend to Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park. Property was acquired by state, county, and city governments, but never transferred to the National Park Service.

Moccasin Bend has been recognized for its nationally significant cultural resources in addition to the scenic values which was the basis for the 1950 legislation. The site was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984. In 1986, a 956-acre area was designated as the Moccasin Bend Archeological District National Historic Landmark.

Moccasin Bend surrounded on three sides by the Tennessee River has a special collection of continuous prehistoric and historic sites that chronicle important aspects of human history on the North American continent, including (1) transitional Paleo-Archaic and Archaic sites, (2) woodland period settlement sites and burial mounds, (3) fortified protohistoric villages, (4) Spanish exploration and settlement of the southeastern United States theme, (5) contact point between native and nonnative peoples, (6) a location along the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, and (7) the location of Union earthworks such as cannon emplacements, rifle pits, bivouac pads, and access roads, which were of strategic importance in breaking the Confederate siege of Chattanooga.

In 1993 a citizen involvement planning process called "Revision 2000" listed Moccasin Bend as a major planning issue. Some individuals and organized groups called for the addition of Moccasin Bend Archeological District National Historic Landmark to the national park system. The Friends of Moccasin Bend National Park, Inc. was formed in 1995 and received a \$25,000 grant to study the economic impacts of NPS designation of the site. The results of this study showed a positive economic benefit to the community if the site was developed as a "major visitor attraction." The Friends of Moccasin Bend and others have proposed an American Indian interpretive center outside the boundaries of the national historic landmark. The American Battlefield Protection Program (part of the National Park Service) awarded a \$20,000 grant to the Friends of Moccasin Bend in 1997 to prepare a battlefield preservation plan for Civil War resources in the national historic landmark. NPS personnel have met with the Friends of Moccasin Bend and others during 1997 and recommended that a planning effort be undertaken that would determine and recommend the best management, protection, and use strategies for the area. The U.S. Congress appropriated funding in fiscal year 1998 to allow this study of Moccasin Bend to proceed.

PURPOSE OF THE COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The purpose of this planning effort is to provide the U. S. Congress with a professional analysis of whether the nationally significant resources of Moccasin Bend are suitable and feasible for addition to the national park system, and to focus on viable management alternatives for the protection and preservation of resources and appropriate public use of the site. This planning effort has considered the following factors:

- the rarity and integrity of the resources
- the threats to those resources
- public use potential of the site, which includes recreation, interpretation, and education
- the level of local and general public support
- the socioeconomic impacts of any designation
- whether similar resources are already protected in the national park system in other federal, state, or private ownership
- costs associated with acquisition, development, and operation
- whether the area is of appropriate configuration to ensure long-term resource protection and visitor use
- identification and evaluation of those management entities that could preserve, protect, and provide for public use of the area
- American Indian values and concerns

PLANNING APPROACH

This plan will be submitted to the U.S. Congress through the secretary of the interior once it has been completed. This planning effort will assist Congress in deciding a course of action. The plan does not recommend a particular alternative or direction to take.

PLANNING PROCESS

The results of this planning process will include a determination of national significance; the suitability and feasibility of including Moccasin Bend as a new unit of the national park system; threats that would compromise the significance, suitability, and feasibility of the site; and a range of alternatives for the management, protection and preservation of resources, and provision of appropriate public use. Each phase of the planning process will be described in detail later in this document.

Planning has been accomplished by establishing a planning team from the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency, the state of Tennessee, and the National Park Service. The planning team has worked to develop close relationships with American Indian groups; the Friends of Moccasin Bend; other individuals and groups interested in the future of Moccasin Bend; local, state, and federal officials; the academic community; and the public.



Open house at the Waterhouse Pavilion in Chattanooga held on February 25, 1998.